

PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

COUNTY OF KERN

Government Code section 8630 and Chapter 2.66 of the Kern County Ordinance Code empower the Director of Emergency Services to proclaim the existence or threatened existence of a local emergency when the County of Kern is affected or likely to be affected by a public calamity and the Board of Supervisors is not in session and the County Administrative Officer is unavailable.

The Director of Emergency Services of the County of Kern does hereby find as follows:

That the Board of Supervisors is not in session and the County Administrative Officer is unavailable, and that conditions of extreme peril to the safety and persons and property have arisen within Kern County and local emergency response agencies are faced with being extended beyond their functional capabilities because of the following events: The 2011 Lightning Fires Incident began on September 10, 2011 at approximately 1:30 a.m. in multiple locations throughout the County due to lightning strikes. More than 50 wildland fires are burning and have consumed an estimated 15,000 wildland acres as of the time of this Proclamation. Three major fires, which are estimated at 0% containment, pose a continuing threat to residential structures. These major fires have been dubbed the Black Fire, the Indian Fire, and the Comanche Fire. The Black Fire is burning in the area of the Keene, Hart Flat, Bear Valley and Golden Hills communities.. Current wind conditions are currently moving the fire away from these communities, but given the normal wind patterns in the area, are expected to change in the afternoon hours. The Indian Fire, burning near the communities of Keene and Hart Flat, has consumed approximately 100 acres in steep terrain. The Comanche Fire is burning in the lower area of the Tejon Canyon and poses a serious threat to the Stallion Springs community within the next 4-6 hours. Precautionary Evacuation messages have been disseminated via ReadyKern for the Keene, Hart Flat, Bear Valley, Golden Hills and Stallion Springs communities. Widespread evacuations and sheltering operations may become necessary later today, based upon fire activity. Kern County Human Services Department and Public Health Department – Animal Control Unit are on heightened alert to support evacuation and sheltering operations as needed. The Kern County Fire Department estimates hundreds of homes in these areas are at risk and is administering the process to request assistance under a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG). Two CAL Fire Type 1 Incident Management Teams are assisting local efforts to fight these fires. The number and distribution of fire activity has created an enormous resource challenge for responding personnel. Additional firefighting resources throughout California have been requested and are en-route for deployment within Kern County. The Kern EOC is currently activated at Level 1 status; the potential exists for higher level EOC activation later today. An ad-hoc phone bank has been established at the EOC to meet the widespread need for public information. The potential for additional dry lightning strikes throughout the weekend may cause additional fire activity. For many of these fires, steep terrain, heavy brush, large amount of fuel, low humidity, erratic wind conditions and continuing dry lightning conditions pose extremely difficult challenges to firefighters. This incident requires extraordinary local response for fire protection, as well as associated emergency response, including evacuation and mass care and sheltering operations and animal services.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED THAT A LOCAL EMERGENCY EXISTS THROUGHOUT KERN COUNTY.

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED THAT DURING THE EXISTENCE OF THE LOCAL EMERGENCY, THE POWERS, FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE EMERGENCY ORGANIZATION OF THIS COUNTY SHALL BE THOSE PRESCRIBED BY STATE LAW AND BY THE ORDINANCES OF THIS COUNTY AND BY THE COUNTY OF KERN EMERGENCY PLAN, APPROVED BY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS RESOLUTION 2008-338 ON AUGUST 26, 2008, AS FROM TIME TO TIME AMENDED THEREAFTER.

Pursuant to Kern County Ordinance Code Section 2.66.040.D.2, and in the absence of the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, it is further requested that a Gubernatorial proclamation to authorize assistance under the California Disaster Assistance Act be made based on the foregoing facts and local emergency declaration.

Date: 9/10/11 Time: 15:30 By: Nick Dunn

Nick Dunn, Fire Chief & Director of Emergency Services
County of Kern

Upon issuance: Fax to OES Warning Center;
Copy to Intel, CAO, and EOC Director
Return Original To County Counsel
BD/